

# Holifield hammer!

## Wycombe Wanderers 5, Croydon 1

A BRILLIANT performance by Mick Holifield on Thursday night gave Croydon (formerly Croydon Amateurs) a foretaste of what they can expect in the Rothmans Isthmian League next season. Holifield's speed and power was the highlight of this hastily arranged friendly which produced six goals (writes Stuart Earp).

Only a handful of people attended the game which turned out to be a highly entertaining encounter after starting half an hour late due to Croydon transport trouble. Croydon, who were recently elected into the Rothmans Isthmian League, began

brightly and played some neat football but their main failing of giving the ball away with inaccurate passing, had to bring their downfall. Wycombe were fed a stream of possession and made the most of it.

They went one up after 15 minutes. Gamblin's throw-in was met by Holifield who made ground up the flank before crossing into the box. Paul Birdseye, who played in midfield, gave Dell no chance with a fine drive.

Terry Reardon, whose shrewd distribution in his own relaxed style often split Croydon's defence, set up the second goal in the 24th minute. It was his free kick that was met by Holifield, Mick glancing home a rare headed goal.

The visitors fought back well against the odds and were rewarded six minutes later with their only goal. After a corner, Hall, their most skilful player, curled in a left foot cross that O'Toole headed powerfully past Kevin Raine with Wycombe's defence somewhat static.

Wanderers made three changes at half time, bringing on John Maskell for Raine, Steve Perrin for Reardon (in midfield) and Keith Mead for Grant (at full back). It took only 13 minutes of the new half before they went further in front, Keith Searle ghosting into the area to nod home Graham Mackenzie's corner.

Sixty seconds later, Holifield was on target again. Latching onto a pass from the left he raced into top gear and smashed home a superb goal. Tony Horseman replaced Searle with 65 minutes gone and soon made his presence felt when playing a delightful one-two with Steve Perrin after the latter had spirited through from midfield. Perrin drove in a powerful shot only to see it hit the base of the upright and cannon out to safety.

At this stage, the Blues were rampant. Croydon battled on bravely but were clearly sub-standard for Wanderers in this mood. In the 85th minute Horseman completed the nap hand.

Mead sent over a first time cross on the left foot which Dylan Evans back headed onto the crossbar. The rebound came out to "Bodger" who knocked home about the easiest of his 41 goals this season.

**WYCOMBE:** K. Raine (sub. J. Maskell 45 mins.); D. Gamblin, P. Wood, D. Bullock, R. Grant (sub. K. Mead 45 mins); G. Mackenzie, T. Reardon (sub. Perrin 45 mins), P. Birdseye; M. Holifield, K. Searle (sub. A. Horseman 65 mins.), D. Evans.

**CROYDON:** B. Dell, D. Hook, B. Towndrow (sub. C. Roots 65 mins), F. Sterling, L. Setters, B. Dilworth, R. Kibble, M. O'Toole, C. Palmer, C. Hall.

**Referee:** P. Lambourne (High Wycombe).

**Half-time:** 2-1. **Goalscorers:** Wycombe — Holifield 2 (24, 59), Birdseye (15), Searle (58), Horseman (85). Croydon — O'Toole (30).

**Official attendance:** 260.